

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENTAL READING COURSES

BACKGROUND

In most universities, the student initially learns a foreign language by mastering the mechanics of grammar and vocabulary. The first two years of study are spent in memorizing word connections and verb conjugations. During this initial stage of learning, reading consists of painstaking translation and habits of word-by-word reading are developed. In addition, the careful pronunciation of each new word is emphasized, with the result that the habit of vocalization (oral or silent) becomes part of the reading process. These habits, vocalization and word-by-word reading, represent less than optimum perception techniques and discourage the practice of extensive reading in the language. Extensive reading in any language is necessary to overcome faulty perception habits, and faulty perception techniques discourage extensive reading, thus creating a vicious cycle which arrests progress in learning a foreign language.

OBJECTIVE

The courses are designed to increase reading efficiency in foreign languages. This objective will be accomplished by achieving the following aims:

- a. Improve reading vocabulary and develop facility in deriving the meaning of words from context.
- b. Increase the span of recognition in the language (the number of words perceived in one fixation of the eye).
- c. Eliminate unnecessary regressions.
- d. Eliminate vocalization and inner speech.
- e. Develop any auxiliary aspects of reading which may hinder progress in reading the language.

METHODS OF TRAINING

The major aims of the course will be achieved by the following training program:

- a. Diagnosis of the reading pattern of each student by standardized reading tests, both in English and in the foreign language, and by interpretation of ophthalmograph records of the eye-movement pattern.
- b. Instruction on the use of effective discrimination and perception techniques.
- c. Tachistoscopic practice in the recognition of words and phrases in the language at fast rates of exposure.

- d. Controlled reading in the foreign language with the use of the reading rate accelerator.
- e. Weekly timed reading exercises to be used as indications of progress in speed of comprehension.
- f. Miscellaneous reading exercises emphasizing various aspects of reading comprehension. These will include practice in skimming, in reading for the main idea, and in reading for retention of the main idea plus all details.
- g. Additional training methods and techniques which may be indicated by the needs of the students or their offices.

PREREQUISITE FOR COURSE

A good vocabulary in the language and the ability to read without translating each word are necessary requirements for acceptance in the course. Fulfillment of requirements will be determined by pretesting and interview two weeks before the scheduled date of the course.

LENGTH OF COURSE

Eight weeks, with classes three days a week. Sessions will be for one and a half hours on Monday and Wednesday and for one hour on Friday.